

REMARKS

This Amendment, submitted in response to the Office Action dated January 10, 2008, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

I. Summary of Non-Final Office Action

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application.

Claims 1-11, 13 are allowed.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hessler (USP 6,798,748) in view of Player (USP 7,072,361).

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Hessler.

II. Preliminary Matter

A certified copy of the foreign priority document was filed in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on June 26, 2003. However, the Examiner did not properly acknowledge receipt of the foreign priority document by checking box 12(a)(1) of the Office Action Summary. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner fully acknowledge receipt of the foreign priority documents in the next Office Action.

III. Summary of Amendment

In this Amendment, Applicant amends allowed claims 1 and 13, and rejected claims 12 and 14 to more clearly define the subject matter claimed therein, respectively.

Applicant also adds new claims 15 and 16 to more fully cover the present application.

Thus, claims 1-16 are all the claims now pending in this application. Entrance and allowance of all the claims including the amended claims are respectfully requested.

IV. Analysis of Claim Rejection

As noted above claims 12 and 14 are amended. The amendments are at least supported in Figs. 1-3 and relevant description in the specification. The claims are now further distinguished from the references.

With respect to claim 12, Hessler does not disclose that the source side (NE A) switches the traffic from the “Signal a” path to the “Signal b” path, assuming that the “Signal a” path to the “Signal b” path correspond to the protected path and the protection path, respectively. In Hessler, the sink side (NE F) instead of the source side (NE A) selects one of the “Signal a” path to the “Signal b” path. This deficiency is not made up for by Player.

In addition, the claimed method is further characterized in that if the failure is cleared in the network, the bridge from the protected path segment to the protection path segment is removed (see the last wherein-clause). However, Hessler does not disclose this aspect of the network connection, but appears only to disclose that the traffic between NE A and NE F is permanently bridged.

At least due to the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 as amended is further distinguished from the references.

Claim 14 is also amended to further distinguish the subject matter from Hessler. At least under the same analysis, this claim would not have been anticipated by Hessler.

V. New Claims

New claims 15 and 16 are supported at least in allowed claim 1, Figs. 1-3 and relevant description in the specification.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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